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Why the Joint Chiefs of Staff Must Change

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, if viewed as the military board of a government corporation, would provide some striking contrasts to organization and management principles followed in the private sector: ...Board consists of five directors, all insiders, four of whom simultaneously head line divisions ... reports to the chief executive and a cabinet member... supported by a corporate staff which draws all its officers from line divisions and turns over about every two years... line divisions control officer assignments and advancement; there is no transfer of officers among line divisions... Board meets three times a week to address operational as well as policy matters, which normally are first reviewed by a four-layered committee system involving full participation of division staffs from the start...at seventy-five percent of the Board meetings, one or more of the directors are represented by substitutes...if the Board can't reach unanimous agreement on an issue, it must--by law--inform its superiors ...at least the four top leadership and management levels within the corporation receive the same basic compensation, set by two committees consisting of a total of 535 members ...and any personnel changes in the top three levels (about 150 positions) must be approved in advance by one of the committees.

I have been a member of this "Board" for nearly eight years and its Chairman for most of the past four years, and have thus served as a member of the Joint Chiefs under four Presidents and four Secretaries of Defense. During this time, and before, many good men have struggled very hard to make the best of the joint system, and most, if not all, have experienced a great sense of frustration in dealing with both large and small problems.

Much of this frustration comes from having to cope with legislative and organizational constraints which reflect concerns of the past, inhibit attempts to meet the rapidly changing demands of today's world, and violate basic leadership and management principles. Yet, despite many studies that have periodically documented problems with this military committee system and made cogent recommendations for improvements, the system has been remarkably resistant to change. Committees can serve a useful purpose in providing a wide range of advice to a chief executive or even in making some key policy decisions, but they are notoriously poor agents for running anything--let alone everything--efficiently.

Although I recognize the very strong and persistent headwinds, I could not leave office in good conscience this summer without making a major effort to illuminate the real issues once more and hopefully wrest some substantial changes. Most of the problems and some of the approaches I will address have been discovered--then reburied--many times in the past thirty-five years. The difference this time is that the proposals for improvement are coming from someone inside the system who for many years has been in the best position to understand the causes and consequences of its shortcomings. In formulating my approach, I have been helped by a group of senior retired officers who are in a better position than those now serving

to step aside from long-standing Service positions and objectively assess the joint system.

ROOTS OF THE PROBLEM

The roots of enforced diffusion of military authority can be traced to a period which precedes the founding of the republic. The Continental Congress distrusted standing armies and military heroes, and even with George Washington in command, established multiple checks on his authority. The principles of the separation of powers and civilian control over the military have appropriately become deeply imbedded in our culture, both in law and in custom as well as in the attitudes of our military professionals.

In many cases, however, the mechanisms erected to exercise such controls have had the unintended effect of permitting--and often promoting--serious organizational deficiencies. As our military institutions evolved, the various military sub-bureaucracies attempted to establish as much independence as possible. As a result, by the end of the nineteenth century, both military departments--War and Navy--were riddled with semi-autonomous, often intractable fiefdoms: branches, corps, departments, bureaus, and so forth.

By the time we went to war with Spain in 1898, conditions were ripe for reform, but as is so often the case it took near military disaster in the conduct of the war to provide the impetus within the Army and Navy to move toward better integration within the Services. The Army, despite much opposition, created a Chief of Staff position in 1903; after several intermediate steps, the Navy created the position of Chief of Naval Operations in 1915. Institutional resistance was still great, however, and it would take decades before centralized authority had shifted to the Chiefs of the Services.

Both the Army and the Navy began World War II with authority and responsibility diffused. The Army still had a large number of semi-autonomous agencies with little effective coordination below the Chief of Staff level. Immediately after Pearl Harbor, General Marshall streamlined the Army by reducing the number of officers reporting directly to him from 61 to six. In December of 1941, the Navy had split responsibility in Washington with Admiral Stark as Chief of Naval Operations and Admiral King as Commander-in-Chief of the US Fleet. A few months later much of that problem was solved when Admiral King assumed both jobs.

Interservice cooperation developed even more slowly. Before technological developments began to blur the boundaries between sea and land warfare, the Services had evolved independently into distinctly different organizations with separate policies and traditions. Competition rather than cooperation was the standard. This evolution resulted in four organizations which even today gravitate quite naturally to two groups of shared traditions and experiences: a maritime grouping (Navy and Marine Corps), and primarily a land warfare grouping (Army and later the Air Force).

However, circumstances surrounding defense in the twentieth century created needs and motives for unified action. The first United States experience in deploying and supplying large expeditionary forces occurred in 1898, and it was not until World War I that the airplane emerged to blur historical

distinctions between ground and sea warfare. These sorts of changes spurred the military into developing embryonic arrangements in the early part of the century for coordinating strategic and logistic plans and for conducting joint maneuvers. Until World War II, however, such arrangements remained rather exceptional and clearly did not work well.

The watershed for development of a permanent interservice system was the crisis atmosphere surrounding our entry into World War II. The British had established a committee of the heads of their military Services in 1923. When intensive military consultation with the British commenced after Pearl Harbor, it soon became apparent that we too needed some such system, not only to assure smoother dealings with the British but also to coordinate our own national war effort.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff were established informally by President Roosevelt in February 1942. The White House appointments calendar suggests that the President met with the Chiefs as a body frequently during 1942, but primarily with the Chief of Staff to the President in the remaining three years of the war. For the most part, the Chiefs, along with their British counterparts, directed largely separate wars through three geographic commands which were essentially divided by Service. General Eisenhower commanded Europe while Admiral Nimitz and General MacArthur commanded separate theaters in the Pacific. Strategic planning was conducted on the basis of direct guidance: put first priority on Europe, use the nation's full resources to support coalition efforts to defeat the enemy forces, and compel the Axis governments to surrender unconditionally. In many ways, it was a simpler world. But as the biographies of many World War II leaders reveal, the joint system established then did not work very well: Service partisanship and inadequate coordination resulted in innumerable delays on many critical issues.

As the war drew to a close, an exhaustive debate ensued on how to organize the postwar military: the Army favored, but the Navy opposed, a highly integrated system. Many at that time believed that the Army would dominate any integrated system. The Air Force, then still part of the Army, supported integration, but was primarily interested in becoming a separate Service.

After nearly two years of studies, committee reports, and presidential interventions, the National Security Act of 1947 emerged as a compromise between those who favored full Service integration and those who feared centralization of military authority. The Act created a loose confederation among the military Services and a Secretary of Defense who initially had little authority. Amendments in 1949, 1953 and 1958 served to strengthen the Secretary's authority and to expand the size and purview of his staff, but as far as the joint system was concerned, the changes were much more marginal. The role of the Chairman was formalized, the Joint Staff was expanded, and the chain-of-command from the President and Secretary of Defense to the Combatant Commands was clarified.

Even modest changes, however, created great controversy. During part of the period the amendments were being addressed, I was aide to General Curtis LeMay, then Commander of the Strategic Air Command, and I had many opportunities to observe the intense debate which took place not only in Washington but throughout much of the military. Only from such a vantage point was it clear how strong the pressures for preserving Service autonomy remained.

President Eisenhower, writing in 1965, said he had reminded his associates on signing the Defense Reorganization Bill of 1958 that it was just another step toward what was necessary. I believe he would be disappointed that further steps have not been taken.

Since 1958, there have been many recommendations for fundamental revisions of the system but few changes in its statutory framework. In 1978 the Commandant of the Marine Corps was made a full member of the Joint Chiefs by law, but this primarily codified what had already become practice. Essentially, despite major changes in the world on which I will comment later, we have had 24 years--and in many ways 35 years--without fundamental revisions of the joint system, a system which in effect represents arrangements developed in a patchwork way during World War II.

HOW WE OPERATE

At the top of that system are the Joint Chiefs, appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. By law, we are the principal military advisors to the President, the Secretary of Defense and the National Security Council.

As a body, we are responsible for reviewing and developing ways to improve the state of military readiness, assessing threats to our security interests and identifying the forces required to meet those threats. We supervise but do not command the senior Combatant Commanders*, and maintain an elaborate command, control and communications system which provides the links to and within our combat forces worldwide. We also consult with foreign military leaders and provide military representation to arms control negotiations teams.

Four of the members of the Joint Chiefs are the military heads of their individual Services who, except in time of war, are restricted to a single four-year term. Since 1947, nearly 50 officers have held the office of Chief of one of the four Services. A Service Chief is not only a full member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff but also is the leader of his uniformed Service. As its principal military spokesman, the Service considers him the guardian of its professional interests, standards and traditions.

The fifth member of the Joint Chiefs, the Chairman, is the only one to devote all of his time to joint affairs. Although outranking all other military officers, the Chairman does not exercise command over the Joint Chiefs or the Armed Forces but acts as an advisor, a moderator, an implementer, and an integrating influence whenever possible. A Chairman is appointed for a two-year term and may be reappointed one time, except during time of war when unlimited two-year reappointments are allowed.

* The Commanders of European Command, Pacific Command, Atlantic Command, Southern Command, Readiness Command, Strategic Air Command, Aerospace Defense Command, Military Airlift Command, and the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force. Some of these have multiple services involved (Unified Commands) and some a single service (Specified Commands).

After four years as a Service Chief and now on my fourth year as the Chairman, I have found that a Chairman generally has more influence but less control than a Service Chief. Whereas a Service Chief can draw on significant institutional sources of formal authority, the Chairman's influence must be derived primarily from his effectiveness in personal relationships. His position provides the opportunity to meet with the leadership of the nation, but it is his professional competence, his ability to present well thought out and broad-based arguments, and his performance as a team player in grappling with difficult questions of national priorities that determine his degree of influence. The Chairman's only institutional advantage is his status as the one senior military official whose sole responsibility encompasses the entire spectrum of defense.

The Joint Chiefs are supported by a Joint Staff which is significantly limited by law in terms of size--it is dwarfed by the Service and Secretary of Defense staffs--and the tenure of officer assignments. Except for urgent matters, a joint action is traditionally handled by assigning the issue to a Joint Staff action officer who meets with comparable level representatives from the four Service staffs. The pressures at this point create a greater drive for agreement than for quality: the process usually results in extensive discussion and careful draftsmanship of a paper designed to accommodate the views of each Service--at least to the extent of not goring anyone's ox.

The paper then works its way up through a series of such committees to a group composed of the Service Operations Deputies (three-star positions on each Service staff) and the three-star Director of the Joint Staff. These individuals--who normally attend the meetings of the Joint Chiefs--can approve a routine paper, but refer any substantive issue or unagreed matter to the Chiefs. As would be expected, papers produced by such a multiple committee process are often watered down or well waffled, although not as badly as Dean Acheson judged when in his 1969 memoirs he wrote of the Joint Chiefs organization: "Since it is a committee and its views are the result of votes on formal papers prepared for it, it quite literally is like my favorite old lady who could not say what she thought until she heard what she said."

When there is not time for this elaborate staff process or even to convene the Joint Chiefs, I must take action and consult with my colleagues later. The most extreme example would be that of direct attack on the United States. The Soviets have a number of submarines on alert off our Atlantic and Pacific coasts which could deliver nuclear warheads on Washington and other targets in a very few minutes. If an attack were made, our warning sensors would pick up the launches within seconds and reports would reach Washington and other key points almost immediately. The general or admiral on 24-hour duty in the National Military Command Center would at once notify me as well as others. I then would recommend a course of action to the President and Secretary of Defense, and would implement the Presidential decision without delay.

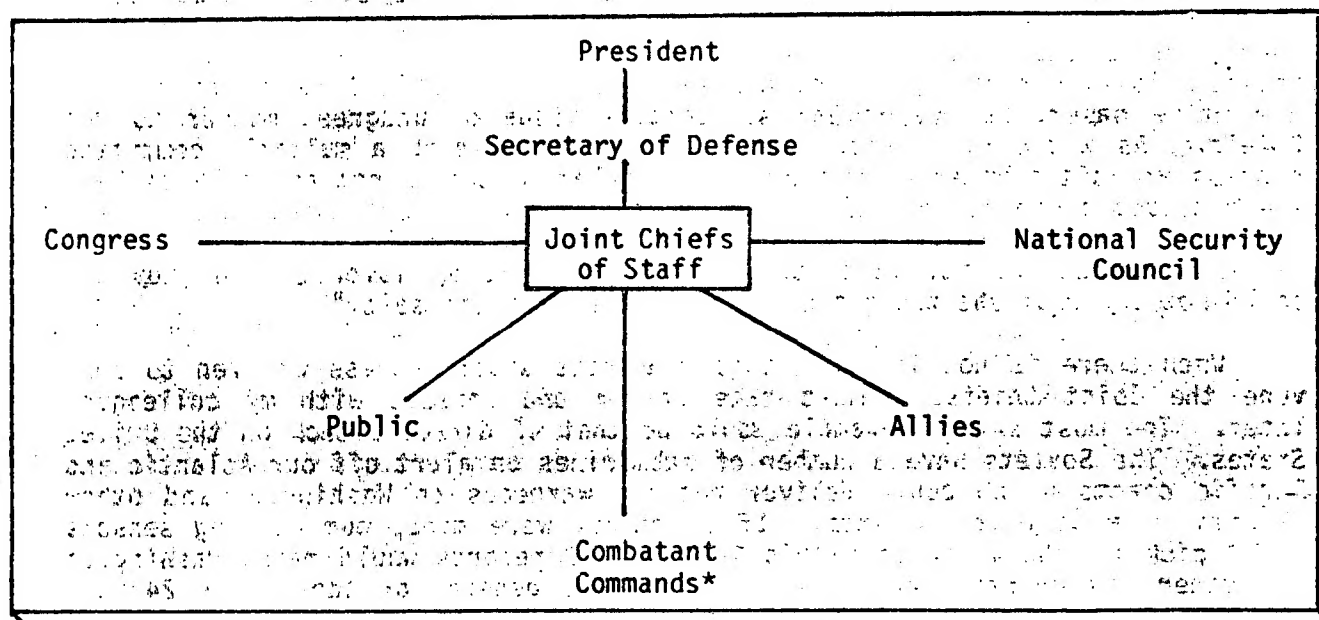
At the other end of the spectrum are incidents such as the one last year when a Libyan pilot fired a missile at our Navy fighters over the Gulf of Sidra and our pilots responded by downing two of the Libyan planes. I was notified immediately and in turn informed the Secretary of Defense. I then proceeded to the National Military Command Center in the Pentagon to determine what further action, if any, was required. The need to respond

to crises and incidents such as this one requires that I be immediately available, a requirement to which I have long been accustomed.

The more routine actions are considered each week in three regularly scheduled Joint Chiefs meetings in which operational as well as policy issues are addressed. When in Washington, the first responsibility of a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is to attend all of these meetings, but because of our worldwide responsibilities we must be gone a considerable amount of the time. The Vice Chief of Staff substitutes when a Service Chief is absent but since the Chairman is not allowed a deputy (a major weakness which I will address later), the senior Service Chief in attendance chairs the meeting when I am away. My experience has been that one or more substitutes attend about three-quarters of the meetings, a situation that results in a lack of continuity.

By law, if we cannot reach unanimous agreement on an issue, we must inform the Secretary of Defense. Such splits are referred to the Secretary a few times a year, but we are understandably reluctant to forward disagreements so we invest much time and effort to accommodate differing views of the Chiefs.

IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS



The Joint Chiefs must maintain many constructive external relationships, the most important of which derives from their role as the senior military advisors to the civilian leadership, particularly the Secretary of Defense

* As pointed out earlier, the Joint Chiefs oversee but do not command the Combatant Commands.

and the President. The Chiefs meet with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense each Tuesday to discuss joint matters as well as attend other meetings with them during the week. As Chairman I meet privately with the Secretary and his Deputy each day and participate with them in interagency discussions.

Traditionally, Presidents have met with the Chiefs as a body only on a few occasions. More often we send memoranda to the Secretary of Defense and request that they be forwarded to the President. Any Chief has the right to ask for an individual appointment or correspond directly with the President, but this right has also been exercised very rarely. To the best of my knowledge, it was last used in 1974 by Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, then Chief of Naval Operations, who wrote directly to President Nixon to urge a stronger negotiating stance during SALT Two negotiations.

The main contact with the President comes when I participate as the Joint Chiefs' representative in National Security Council meetings. Such meetings are scheduled frequently by President Reagan who has used the National Security Council forum more than any President since Eisenhower. I have the full opportunity at these meetings to express to the President the corporate views of the Chiefs as well as my personal views on any matters, regardless of whether the Chiefs have addressed them. I also have the opportunity to express such views below the Presidential level as a member of various interagency and Defense working groups such as the Military Manpower Task Force, the Defense Resources Board and the Armed Forces Policy Council.

Next to advising the President and the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs' most important responsibility is the requirement to oversee the Combatant Commands. In meeting this responsibility, it is essential to nurture a close relationship with the commanders through long-standing personal contacts and frequent communications as well as visits to the field. The Service Chiefs are also responsible to their Secretaries for organizing, equipping, and training the forces assigned to the Combatant Commands.

Responsiveness to Congress is another important responsibility of the Joint Chiefs. The Secretary of Defense and I normally appear together before eight Congressional committees--many times each year before some. Service Chiefs also have hearings before several Committees, particularly those concerned with Service budget matters. And the Joint Chiefs occasionally will appear as a body, as we did during various arms control hearings. Extensive questioning of every action of the Defense Department is the norm during hearings as well as in detailed written questions addressed to us throughout the year.

Whenever military officers appear at a Congressional hearing, we are expected to respond fully to questioning, even when asked for personal views about matters on which we may disagree with the position of the Administration. I have responded to unsolicited questions with personal views at variance with the decisions of the civilian leadership on a number of occasions, the most recent of which concerned my reservations on the basing decision for the MX Intercontinental Ballistic Missile. I believe our system is unique among the nations of the world in airing such disagreements. A number of years ago, when I explained this aspect of US military-Congressional relations to a head of government of one of our Allies, he responded that one

of his military officers would be fired if he gave a view other than the official position to his Parliament. The US civilian leadership throughout the years has understood and even supported the military's responsiveness to Congressional questions so long as our comments have been made in good faith and neither solicited nor intended to circumvent a decision. I have found that senior officers have generally been sensitive to this responsibility.

Since it is essential to maintain the American people's confidence and support for our defense programs, the Joint Chiefs consider public relations, including speeches and other public appearances, another important function.

Finally, it is important for the Joint Chiefs to work very closely with our friends and Allies since we simply cannot go it alone in today's world. I meet with my NATO counterparts on at least four occasions each year, and with officials from many other countries somewhat less frequently. Since almost every aspect of our job has international implications, foreign travel is an indispensable aid to understanding key issues and establishing good relations with foreign leaders.

These important external relationships take a great deal of time, but it is the cumbersomeness of the committee processes that constrains our ability to produce the best joint military advice. One of the Presidentially-directed studies of the joint system, the 1978 "Steadman Report," concluded that the advice provided personally (usually orally) by the Chairman and the Service Chiefs was of high quality but that the institutional products (the formal position papers) were not found very useful.

SOME PROGRESS ...

Despite the institutional constraints, however, we have managed to make some joint program improvements over the last few years. Much of the credit for whatever progress has been made must go to my colleagues on the Joint Chiefs. The nation has been, and continues to be, well served by these competent, hard-working officers. Some of the improvements are:

- development of a broader joint exercise program, to include mobilization practice.
- establishment of a Joint Deployment Agency to integrate deployment plans and activities.
- integration of our land and sea transportation systems.
- redirection of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces to achieve better understanding of mobilization.
- revamping of our joint education system, to include establishment, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense, of research centers at the National Defense University to help us take fresh looks at defense problems.
- organizational adjustments for better integration of the joint command, control and communications system.

- establishment of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force to improve our capability to deploy and operate forces in Southwest Asia and as a mechanism to develop and exercise integrated operations by elements of all four Services.
- increasing the Combatant Commanders' opportunity to influence resource decisions, to include appearing before the Defense Resources Board.
- involving the Service Chiefs in specific joint issues when visiting the field in order to report findings and recommendations at a Joint Chiefs meeting.

BUT PERSISTENT SHORTCOMINGS

While the above represent some important and helpful changes in interservice programs, such progress has been limited primarily to issues which only marginally affect important Service interests. However, unless the basic long-term shortcomings of the system are corrected, the severity of their consequences will continue to increase as the national security environment becomes ever more complex. We need to spend more time on our war fighting capabilities and less on an intramural scramble for resources.

In my view, the basic causes of our most serious deficiencies can be divided into two categories: personnel and organization.

Personnel. There is inadequate cross-Service and joint experience in our military, from the top down. The incentives and rewards for seeking such experience are virtually nonexistent. And the problem is compounded by the high degree of turbulence in key positions.

We do not prepare officers to assume the responsibilities of membership on the Joint Chiefs as well as we should. I include myself in this judgement even though I was fortunate in having an unusually diversified background before becoming a member of the Joint Chiefs. In my many years in the Air Force, I had been assigned to bombers and fighters, command and staff, Washington and field tours. I had attended the National War College, an institution designed to prepare military officers and foreign policy civilians for joint and interagency duty. I had been an aide to an unusually competent commander, General LeMay, and he taught me much--his initial guidance to me was "you are in this job to learn first and serve second and do not mix those priorities." I had ten years overseas in Japan, Vietnam and Europe, including direct involvement in two wars. And in my last overseas assignment I had two jobs--as US air commander with geographic responsibility stretching from Norway to Iran, and concurrently as a NATO air commander with coalition responsibility for the air forces of a number of nations. However, I still lacked two major ingredients of a fully rounded experience when I was appointed Chief of Staff of the Air Force. I had begun service in the Army and had maintained close contact with that Service even after the Air Force became independent. But my contact with the maritime forces--the Navy and Marines--was limited. I had visited and had participated in joint exercises with maritime forces, but still did not have as deep an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, their doctrines and traditions,

as I would have liked. Unfortunately, my experience in this regard is far from unique: few Navy or Marine officers have substantial experience with the Army or Air Force, and vice versa.

The second gap in my experience is also far too common among officers who assume key positions in the joint system (both on the Joint Chiefs and as Combatant Commanders): I had never served on the Joint Staff or in the headquarters of a Unified Command. And, frankly, I have found from my own experience that serving on the Joint Chiefs as head of a Service does not necessarily make an individual a truly joint officer. My perspective changed when I became Chairman and was immersed every hour in joint problems. But as Air Force Chief, while I prided myself on my joint attitude and believed that some fundamental changes were needed, I must confess that I was very reluctant --as were the other Service Chiefs--to accept any infringement on Service autonomy on individual issues.

Most newly assigned officers arrive on the Joint Staff or a Unified Command staff from a Service-oriented career with little interservice experience and inadequate preparation for joint duty. In the case of the Joint Staff, the problem is compounded by statutory limits--restrictions which do not apply to the Service and Secretary of Defense staffs. For example, public law (10 USC 143) states that:

- "The tenure of members of the Joint Staff...except in time of war,... may [not] be more than three years."
- "Except in time of war ... officers may not be reassigned to the Joint Staff [in] less than three years ... except ... with the approval of the Secretary of Defense" who may waive this restriction for no more than 30 officers.

Furthermore, officers come from and return to their Services which control their assignments and promotions. The strong Service string thus attached to a Joint Staff officer (and to those assigned to the Unified Commands as well) provides little incentive--and often considerable disincentive--for officers to seek joint duty or to differ with their Service position in joint deliberations. Indeed, it is hard to argue that Joint Staff duty is a path to the top. With the exception of Army General Earle Wheeler, not a single Director of the Joint Staff or one of its major components has ever become Chief of his Service or Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

We have many outstanding officers on the Joint Staff who work very hard under very difficult conditions with few rewards. It is no wonder that many retire while on or soon after leaving the Joint Staff, or seek early release for a more rewarding job. The three-year limit on assignments--when coupled with our reluctance to stand in the way of good people attempting to move to Service jobs that may further their careers--results in a turnover of the Joint Staff in a little more than two years. Better continuity is required.

Organization. In the Joint system we not only have the advantages and all the disadvantages typical of committees, but our problems are further compounded by the "spokesman-statesman" dilemma that a Service Chief encounters. This is especially true when the issue of distribution--of resources or of missions--is raised. Time after time during my years as a member of the

Joint Chiefs, the extraordinary difficulty of addressing--let alone gaining the Chiefs' agreement on--the distribution of constrained resources has been driven home to me. A Service Chief finds himself in a very tough position when asked to give up or forego significant resources or important roles and missions, both because his priorities have been shaped by his Service experience and because he must be the loyal and trusted leader of a Service whose members sincerely believe their Service deserves a greater share of constrained resources and of military missions--and the control thereof.

Service Chiefs do differ with the position of their Service staffs on occasion, but to do so too often and particularly on fundamental issues is to risk losing the support essential for carrying out Service responsibilities. One former Chief relates that during a joint meeting, a Service action officer (a Major) handed him a note which said, "General, under no condition can you agree to the third paragraph." This incident is representative of a phenomenon which has often been called "the tyranny of the action officer." However, that phrase tends to obscure a significant point: the Major was expressing the viewpoint of a large and often unforgiving bureaucracy.

We in the defense business share the problem which afflicts most of Corporate America--the difficulties inherent in long-range planning. Today's business leaders are of course well aware of the problems of accurately predicting the future and developing successful strategies to improve long-range profitability--and creating incentives within constituencies to address the long-term. Those of us responsible for defense planning must contend with the same problems as well as further complications stemming from the lack of a readily calculable "bottom line," the buffetings of political and social disturbances anywhere on the globe, and a high degree of resistance to change.

Any institution that imbues its members with traditions, doctrines and discipline is likely to find it quite difficult to assess changes in its environment with a high degree of objectivity. Deep-seated Service traditions are important in fostering a fighting spirit, Service pride and heroism, but they may also engender a tendency to look inward and to perpetuate doctrines and thought patterns that do not keep pace with changing requirements. Since fresh approaches to strategy tend to threaten an institution's interests and self-image, it is often more comfortable to look to the past than to seek new ways to meet the challenges of the future. When coupled with a system that keeps Service leadership bound up in a continuous struggle for resources, such inclinations can lead to a preoccupation with weapon systems, techniques, and tactics at the expense of sound strategic planning.

Despite valiant efforts to improve strategic planning in the Pentagon, we are often faced with intense pressures to spend most of our time addressing immediate issues. Those pressures are particularly great with regard to budget actions: sometimes we are addressing three budget documents at a time. For example, in the fall of 1981 we were working with Congress on the Fiscal Year 1982 budget (well after the fiscal year had started), preparing the 1983 budget for submission to Congress in January 1982, and doing long-range planning for the following five-year budget period (1984-1988). The work with the Congress obviously took budgetary precedence, and at the same time, big and small crises (Poland, El Salvador, Libya, Middle East, etc.) were rippling through Washington with increased frequency. Under such conditions, it takes strong discipline to avoid being a total captive of the urgent.

NEEDED CHANGES

The shortcomings outlined above have been with the joint system for too long and the need for correction is more urgent now than at any time. Since we live in an era when conflicts could erupt regionally or globally much more quickly than in the past, we must build our military strength without delay--and we must be able to integrate our military forces with great efficiency.

It is clear to me that the fundamental problem is not with individuals but is an organizational one. I have been a close observer or a direct participant in joint activities for more than 20 years. During that time there have been six Chairmen and dozens of Service Chiefs and the basic problems have continued regardless of who has been in a specific chair.

As a minimum, we need changes in three specific areas:

(1) Strengthen the role of the Chairman.

Many areas cannot be addressed effectively by committee action, particularly when four out of five committee members have institutional stakes in the issues and the pressure is on to achieve unanimity in order to act. It is unreasonable to expect the Service Chiefs to take one position as Service advocates when dealing in Service channels, and a totally different position in the joint arena. Such matters should therefore be removed from addressal by the Joint Chiefs as a body.

To the extent that an interservice perspective is needed on distribution issues, that perspective could be better provided by the Chairman in consultation with the Combatant Commanders. This in turn would require strengthening of the Unified Commander's role with respect to his Service Component Commanders who command the forces and report both to the Unified Commander and the Service Chief. Under the current system the Service Component Commander's attention is often drawn more to Service issues than to interservice coordination problems. In other areas--such as joint operational and long-range planning, crisis management, and a number of routine matters--neither the Service Chiefs nor the Service staffs need participate at the level of detail in which they are involved today.

Furthermore, the Chairman should be authorized a deputy. It is an anomaly that the military officer with the most complex job is virtually the only senior--and in many cases not so senior--officer who does not have a deputy. This causes substantial problems of continuity when individual Service Chiefs, who spend only a fraction of their time on joint activities, stand in for the Chairman in his absence. Secondly, the Chairman needs assistance, particularly in insuring the readiness, improving the war planning, and managing the joint exercising of the combatant forces. I would also recommend that, at least until there is far more cross-experience and education among all four Services, the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman should come from the two different groupings (one be a Navy or Marine officer and the other an Army or Air Force officer).

I am convinced that without some such revised role for the Chairman and less reliance on the cumbersome committee processes, the very great demands on the time of a Service Chief will continue and perhaps even worsen. Presi-

dent Eisenhower recognized this problem and when he transmitted his final reorganization plan to Congress in 1958, he stated: "This situation is produced by their having the dual responsibilities of chiefs of the military services and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The problem is not new but has not yielded to past efforts to solve it." Unfortunately, the approach Eisenhower then advocated--having a Chief delegate major portions of his Service responsibilities to his Vice Chief (with the hope that this would overcome many of the joint problems)--has not worked either, as the subsequent 24 years of experience have shown. I, for one, would also like to see the Service Chiefs be able to spend more time as the leaders of their Service in improving the capabilities of their units and in managing the spending of the billions of dollars in the Service budgets.

There is great wisdom in having the Joint Chiefs of Staff act as senior military advisors to the President and Secretary of Defense on certain key issues. But without a stronger role and better support for the Chairman, the work of the Joint Chiefs is likely to remain too dispersed, diluted, and diffused to provide the best possible military advice or to insure the full capability of our combatant forces.

(2) Limit Service staff involvement in the joint process.

As mentioned before, the Service staffs dwarf the Joint Staff with many of the Service officers duplicating the work of the Joint Staff. There are two basic problems. First, the Service staff involvement is a cumbersome staffing process and, second, the Service Chiefs receive their advice on joint matters from their Service staffs.

There are some advantages of having Service staffs involved in the joint process, but we should abolish the current system in which each Service has almost a de facto veto on every issue at every stage of the routine staffing process. President Eisenhower noted 23 years ago that "these laborious processes exist because each military department feels obliged to judge independently each work product of the Joint Staff." The situation has not changed. The role of Service staffs can and should be reduced to providing informational inputs--the result would be a better product and fewer officers needed on the Service staffs.

When a Service Chief acts on a Service matter he should receive advice from his Service staff and when he acts on a joint matter he should receive his advice from the Joint Staff; however, since the beginning of the joint process, Service Chiefs have relied almost exclusively on their Service staffs in preparing for joint meetings. It is unrealistic to expect truly interservice advice from a staff comprised of officers from only one Service. The Joint Staff can and should provide such advice.

(3) Broaden the training, experience and rewards for joint duty.

Finally, more officers should have more truly joint experiences at more points in their careers--and should be rewarded for doing so. There should be more interchange among Services at the junior ranks, as Eisenhower strongly advocated, and preparation for joint assignments should be significantly upgraded. The joint educational system should also be expanded and improved. (Along these lines, one innovative idea that is being addressed is to have all

newly appointed generals and admirals attend a common course of joint education.) An assignment to the Joint Staff or to a Unified Command headquarters should be part of an upward mobility pattern rather than a diversion or end of a career, as has been the case so often in the past. It is difficult to see how present patterns can be changed, however, without some influence by the Chairman on the selection and promotion of officers. Also, the statutory restrictions on service on the Joint Staff should be removed.

Despite the magnitude of the task, I am encouraged by the willingness of my colleagues to address the issues and by the support of the Secretary of Defense and others in the Administration on the need for change. Furthermore, I sense a different mood in Congress than that shown in the '40s and '50s when large and powerful elements strongly protected Service autonomy. I am working hard in my final months as Chairman to bring about the necessary changes. More specifically, I have underway a course of action which addresses, first, recommendations to my colleagues on changes which are within the authority of the Chiefs, and second, recommendations to the Secretary of Defense and the President on other changes, to include specific proposals for legislative action.

Such change never comes easily. As the Navy approached its major reorganizations at the start of the century, Mahan concluded that no Service could agree to give up sovereignty, but would have to have reorganization forced upon it from outside the organization. Six months before Pearl Harbor, a farsighted Chairman of the General Board of the Navy proposed a truly integrated joint system to the Secretary of the Navy. Like many innovative proposals before and since, the idea was referred to a committee for study and overtaken by events. It is interesting to note, however, that then-Brigadier General Dwight D. Eisenhower supported this proposal with the judgment that "coordination by cooperation is ineffective."

The Services have an understandable desire to protect organizational interests, to preserve their sovereignty, and to conserve hard-won prerogatives. Nevertheless, we cannot escape the fact that our national security today requires the integration of Service efforts more than at any time in our history. To attempt to achieve meaningful integration only through the existing committee system is to leave it at the mercy of well-proven institutional counterpressures. I believe we can find a middle ground which draws on the strengths of the separate Services and of having Service Chiefs as members of the Joint Chiefs, while at the same time making the changes necessary to strengthen our joint system. If not, major surgery will be required.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff

General David C. Jones, U.S.A.F.
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
(1978-80, 1980-82)

Admiral Thomas B. Hayward
Chief of Naval Operations
(1978-82)

General Lew Allen, Jr.
Chief of Staff of the Air Force
(1978-82)

General Edward C. Meyer
Chief of Staff of the Army
(1979-83)

General Robert H. Barrow
Commandant of the Marine Corps
(1979-83)